



Communications Plan *Update*

Seward to Glenn Connection PEL Study

A companion to the 2022
communications plan

Anchorage

January 30, 2025

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Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AMATS	Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions
ASD	Anchorage School District
ATC	Agencies and Tribes Committee
CAC	Community Advisory Committee
CC	Community Council
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
Comms Plan	Communications Plan
DOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
EAST	<i>East Anchorage Study of Transportation</i>
EJ	Environmental Justice
FAQ	frequently asked questions
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
HDR	HDR Engineering, Inc.
H2H	Highway to Highway (2008 Project)
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
L RTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MOA	Municipality of Anchorage
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
PEL	Planning and Environmental Linkages
<i>PEL Guidebook</i>	<i>DOT&PF's Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Guidebook</i>
Project	Seward Highway to Glenn Highway Connection
Study	Seward to Glenn PEL Study
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
Title VI	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
U.S.C.	United States Code
WCAG	Web Conformance Accessibility Guidelines

Introduction

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Central Region, is conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study to identify and evaluate options to improve safety, livability, regional travel between the Seward and Glenn Highways, and local travel within the surrounding neighborhoods. The study will also identify ways to improve access between the Port of Alaska and the highway network.

A Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study is a “collaborative and integrated approach to transportation decision-making that considers environmental, community, and economic goals early in the transportation planning process.”¹ PEL studies are used to inform environmental reviews and streamline project development.

DOT&PF is engaging the community and key agency stakeholders in the PEL Study (Study) to guide the development and delivery of transportation investments in the Study area. The Study area generally follows Bragaw Street on the east, Northern Lights Boulevard on the south, C Street on the west, and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson on the north. The Study allows DOT&PF to develop and screen improvement alternatives with committees, agencies, and the public to narrow down alternatives to carry forward into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review and project design phases.

Study decisions are not made in a vacuum, and DOT&PF recognizes that projects are most successful when stakeholders understand a project’s purpose, its process, and have a voice in its development. This Communication Plan updates the Seward-Glenn Connection’s [April 2022 Communication Plan](#) and details the process and methods DOT&PF is using to engage its stakeholders meaningfully during the final phases of the Study’s development.

Ultimately, the outcome of the Study will be a recommended solution for improving the corridor’s overall safety, connectivity, livability, operations, and resiliency for all users. This recommendation is expected to be carried forward into—and used to inform—a deeper analysis under NEPA.

Purpose of Communications Plan

Public Involvement is any process that involves stakeholders in problem solving or decision making and uses public input to make decisions. This includes identifying problems and opportunities, developing alternatives and making decisions.

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

Feedback from the community and stakeholders is central to the development of design concepts and is foundational to the PEL process.² This Communications Plan has been developed by HDR for DOT&PF to

¹ [Planning & Environmental Linkages Overview | Center for Environmental Excellence | AASHTO \(transportation.org\)](#)

² 23 United States Code [U.S.C.] 168 and 23 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 450.212 and 450.318, and as explained in DOT&PF’s *Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Guidebook (PEL Guidebook)*; www.dot.state.ak.us/stwddes/desenviro/assets/pdf/procedures/pel_guidebook.pdf

update and supplement the [April 2022 Communication Plan](#) and outline DOT&PF's approach to public outreach for the final phases of the Seward Highway to Glenn Highway Connection PEL Study: Alternatives Refinement, Draft Document Development, and Final PEL Availability.

DOT&PF is committed to providing meaningful opportunities for public participation and stakeholder engagement as outlined by IAP2's public involvement spectrum. This communication plan is designed to meet these DOT&PF public engagement goals, founded in IAP2's guidance:

- Keep the public informed on the process and issues.
- Listen to and acknowledge public input and concerns.
- Provide feedback on how public input has influenced the PEL's alternatives development.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for stakeholders to share input through a variety of communication methods.

To achieve these goals, the Study Team will:

- Build awareness of the Study using strategic communications tools and tactics to reach diverse audiences.
- Inform and involve stakeholders, including residents of potentially affected areas; commuters; area businesses and employees; agencies; community organizations; and others.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for the public and stakeholders to provide input.
- Respond to Project-related inquiries, comments, and requests, and document feedback for Study consideration.

DOT&PF's strategy for achieving these goals and objectives during the Project's final phases is outlined in this plan.

Study Background and Description

DOT&PF Central Region initiated a PEL Study of the Seward to Glenn Connection for Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) in 2021 based on the desire of the Fairview Community Council. This Study intends to create a plan for recommended improvements from the Seward Highway, near 20th Avenue, to the Glenn Highway, east of its intersection with Airport Heights Drive. This Study will also consider improvements that could connect the highway network to the Port of Anchorage (Figure 1).

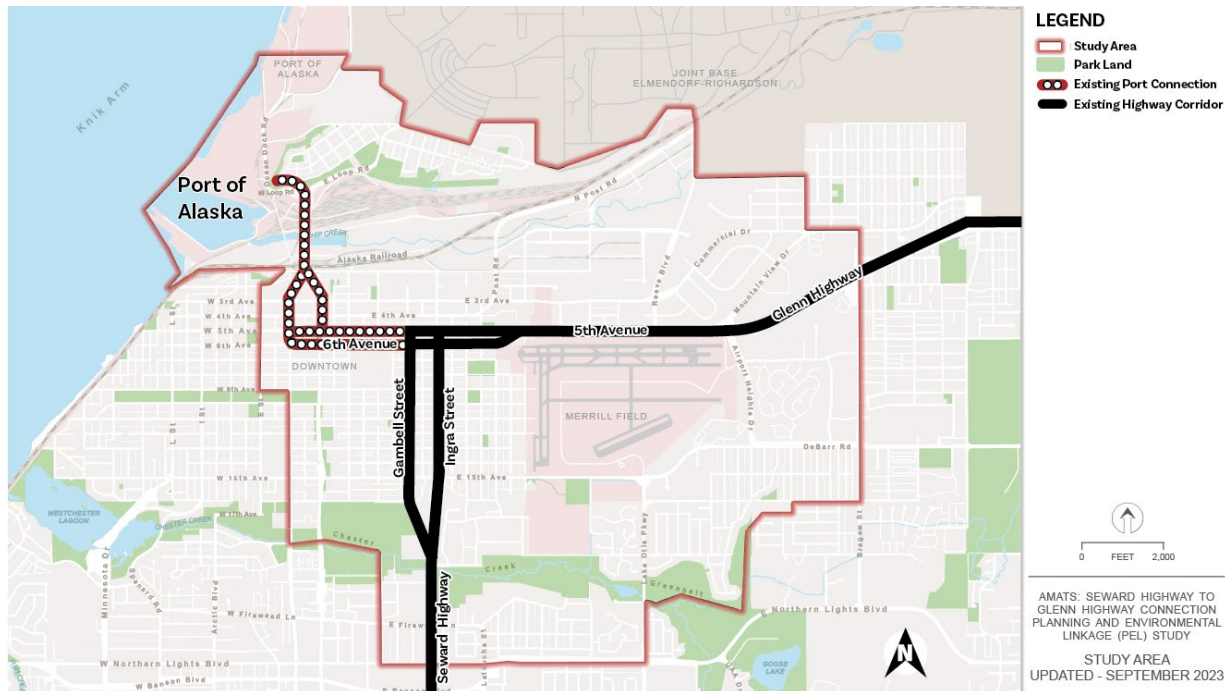


Figure 1 Study Area Map

Anchorage, Alaska, is Southcentral Alaska's transportation hub. The historic Glenn Highway route, connecting Anchorage to Palmer and the Alaska Highway, was completed in the 1930s. The Seward Highway, linking Anchorage to the Kenai Peninsula, was constructed through established Anchorage neighborhoods as part of the interstate highway system in 1951. Both routes converged near Downtown Anchorage but were never joined. In 1961 and 1962, Ingraham and Gambell Streets were converted from two-way, two-lane cross-sections to an eight-lane couplet, cutting through the heart of Fairview. This transportation legacy has created disproportionate impacts on neighborhoods and communities as Anchorage's population and economy grew and freight and vehicular traffic increased.

The idea of connecting the Seward Highway to the Glenn Highway to expediate the free flow of vehicular traffic was first identified in the Anchorage 1972 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). In 2001, AMATS's *East Anchorage Study of Transportation* (EAST) concluded that connecting the Seward and Glenn Highways was essential to keep pace with traffic projections. In 2008, DOT&PF started an environmental review process to advance a solution via the Highway to Highway (H2H) Project. While H2H was canceled by the Governor in 2010, the idea to connect the highways was included in subsequent versions of the AMATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), including AMATS MTP 2040.

The current PEL process began in 2021 as the response to the highway connection project included in the MTP 2040. A PEL, as described on page three in the Project's initial [April 2022 Communication Plan](#), is an approach to transportation decision making that considers environmental, community, and economic goals early in the planning stage to minimize redundancies, promote efficient and cost-effective solutions, and enhance Study implementation. The PEL process also allows decision makers and stakeholders to narrow the range of alternatives to be considered and to identify and prepare for issues to be addressed in subsequent NEPA compliance and design phases. Public and agency input at milestone stages of a PEL study are key components that allow the study analyses to be incorporated into future NEPA documents (Figure 2).

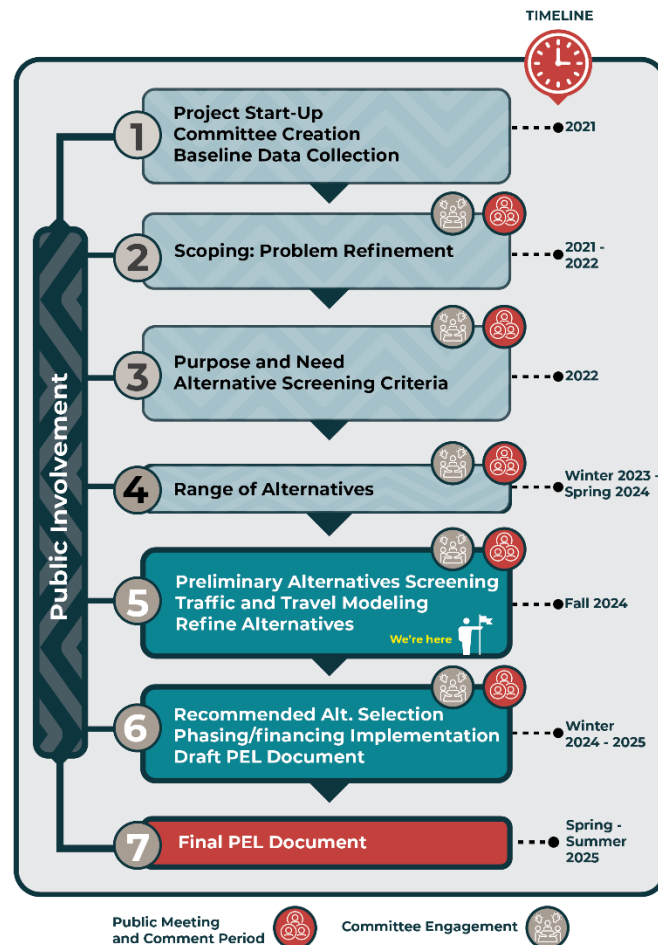


Figure 2 PEL Steps and Public Involvement Input Integrations

Roles and Responsibilities

DOT&PF

DOT&PF is the Study champion and lead agency for developing the Seward to Glenn PEL study. In addition to Study oversight, DOT&PF is responsible for Study direction, decision-making and responding to all media inquiries related to the Project.

HDR Engineering, Inc.

HDR is the Study consultant hired by DOT&PF to develop the PEL. HDR is responsible for developing alternatives and preparing the PEL Study for DOT&PF's approval. HDR is also responsible for working in collaboration with DOT&PF to develop and deliver meaningful public involvement activities to engage

community members, agencies, and others in the decision-making process. HDR provides communications support, serves as point of contact for and manages public inquiries, and provides ongoing strategic advice to DOT&PF on public communications over the life of the Study.

Our Stakeholders

DOT&PF understands people want to be involved in the decisions that affect them, values public input, and is committed to evaluating that input to deliver a preferred design alternative focused on balancing diverse community needs and desires. The Study Team also understands the individuals, groups, agencies, and organizations involved in the Study may have competing priorities and opinions. The communication strategies and tactics in this communications plan include opportunities for stakeholders to be informed about the Study and its process, and to provide input and comments throughout the Study's development.

The Study reaches diverse stakeholder groups, which have been identified generally as:

- General public, with a focus on adjacent and/or highly affected communities
- Committees (Agencies and Tribes [ATC], Community Advisory, Technical Advisory, and Executive Committees)
- Other Specific stakeholders (e.g., legislators, non-motorized users, study-area business owners)

The Study Team identified stakeholders early in Study planning (see [April 2022 Communications Plan](#), and Appendix B – Our Stakeholders) and maintains a contact list for sharing electronic and print communications related to the Study. These lists are updated regularly throughout the course of the Study (see Appendix B of this document, which highlights highly engaged stakeholders that are a focus for communications during the remainder of the study).

Environmental Justice³

DOT&PF recognizes the impacts historic transportation decisions have made on Anchorage's communities and seeks to remove barriers that prevent traditionally underserved populations from participating in PEL activities and decisions. These include providing

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI)

translated materials, translation services on request, and accommodations for visual, hearing, or other accessibility needs; Study communications are designed to meet the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), Executive Order 12898 Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Order

³ The Environmental Protection Agency defines environmental justice (EJ) as the just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of income, race, color, national origin, tribal affiliation, or disability, in agency decision-making and other Federal activities that affect human health and the environment. [Environmental Justice | US EPA](#). See also [April 2022 Communication Plan](#), 3.8 Environmental Justice.

6640.23A FHWA Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations.⁴

Using US Census data⁵ and the EPA EJ Screening and Mapping Tool,⁶ the Study Team regularly evaluates demographic information within the Study area. The Anchorage School District (ASD) also verifies enrollment using languages spoken in the home other than English.⁷

Study overview materials such as fact sheets, frequently asked questions (FAQs), and handouts were translated into Samoan and Spanish, based on ASD data for home languages at Dr. Etheldra Davis Fairview Elementary School, as well as Hmong. Translation services can also be made available at public meetings with advance request.

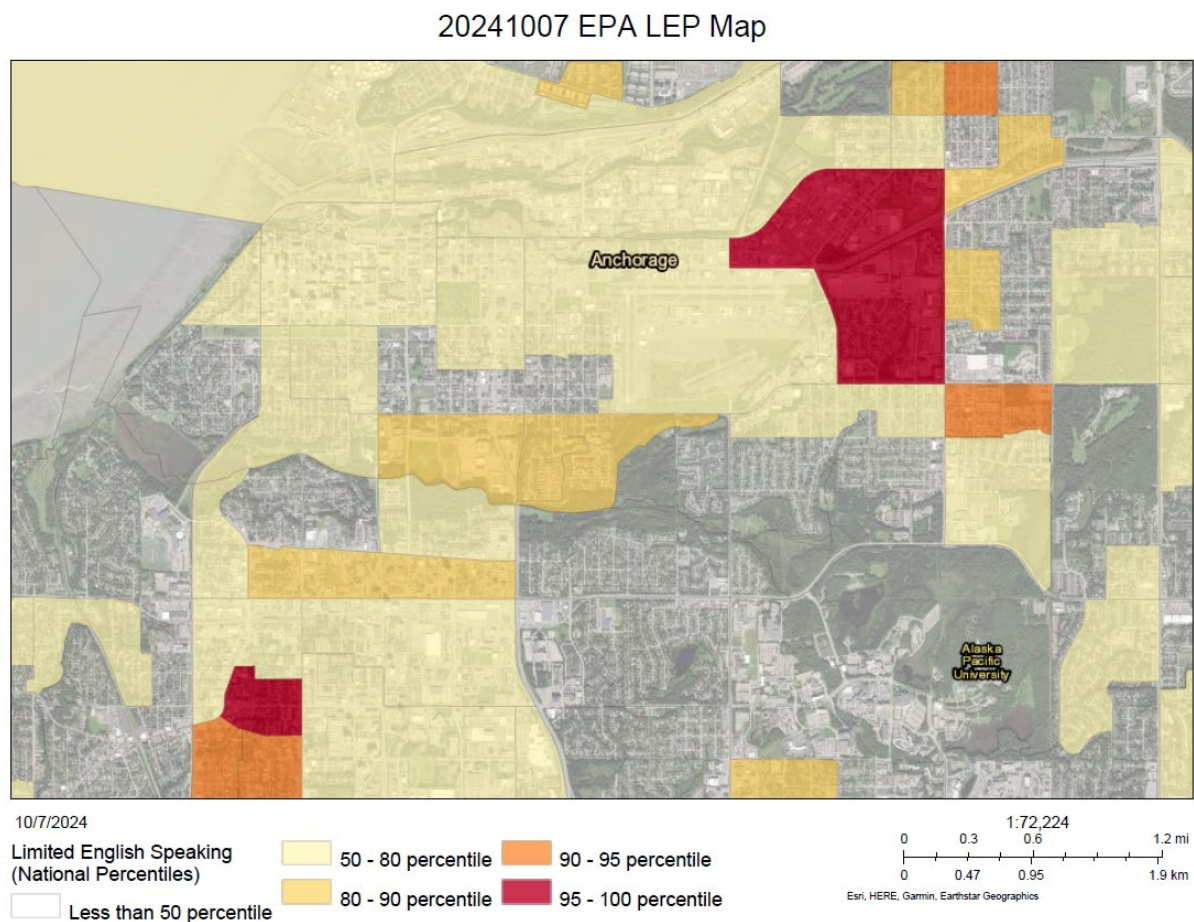


Figure 3 EPA Environmental Justice Map showing Limited English Proficiency

HDR maintains files documenting Title VI compliance. These materials are available upon request and will be included in the draft and final PEL documents.

⁴ See Section 3.2 of the April 2022 Comms Plan for additional information on Federal EJ requirements.

⁵ [Data \(census.gov\)](https://data.census.gov/)

⁶ [EJScreen: Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool | US EPA](#)

⁷ [Current Student Enrollment | Tableau Public](#)

Accessibility

Americans with Disabilities Act

All Study public events are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant and are designed to include reasonable accommodation and provide full participation by people with disabilities. Individuals requiring auxiliary aids, services, and/or other special modifications to participate are asked to notify the Study Team by phone or TDD at least five days prior to when the accommodation is needed.

It is the policy of the DOT&PF that no qualified individual with a disability shall, solely on the basis of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs, services or activities as provided by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). DOT&PF further assures that every effort will be made to provide nondiscrimination in all its programs and activities regardless of the funding source.

[DOT&PF ADA Policy Statement](#)

Digital Accessibility

Digital Accessibility refers to the inclusive practice of removing barriers that prevent interaction with, or access to websites, digital tools, and technologies, by people with disabilities. Section 508⁸ Amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 outlines federal requirements for making digital assets accessible to persons using assistive technology. Study materials and online communications are Section 508-compliant documents in accordance with ADA⁹ and the Web Conformance Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

Individuals who feel they may have been subject to discrimination subject to Title VI, or Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or related statutes may [file a complaint](#) with DOT&PF's Office of Civil Rights.

Tribal Outreach

The Study falls within the traditional lands of the Dena'ina people. DOT&PF promotes consultation and coordination with Alaska Native tribes, with the goal of ensuring that the department conducts consultation in a culturally sensitive manner.¹⁰ The tribes most immediately affected by the Study, the Knik Tribal Council and Native Village of Eklutna, were invited to participate in the Study's ATC.

Committees¹¹

In addition to outreach to specific stakeholder groups, four committees representing key stakeholder groups were established at the beginning of the Study. These committees are responsible for providing input and feedback to the Study Team through the lens of their agency, organization, or interest.

Agencies and Tribes Committee

Certain federal, state, and/or local agencies may have permitting or other approval authority for the Study during the PEL and subsequent NEPA development. DOT&PF also recognizes its responsibility to

⁸ <https://www.section508.gov/develop/applicability-conformance/>

⁹ <https://www.ada.gov/assets/pdfs/web-rule.pdf>

¹⁰ [Tribal Relations, Transportation & Public Facilities, State of Alaska](#)

¹¹ See also Section 5.2.1 April 2022 Comms Plan

fully engage tribes that have a vested interest based on their present and historic ties to the land. The ATC engages tribes and agencies in the Study process and gathers input on the corridor needs and potential solutions based on their specific interests and areas of expertise.

Community Advisory Committee

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) represents local business owners, property owners, neighborhood representatives, potentially impacted groups, and other user groups in the Study process. The CAC provides input on corridor needs and potential solutions from individuals and groups immediately affected by Study decisions.

Technical Advisory Committee

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of transportation, engineering, and emergency response professionals, evaluates specific technical aspects of the Study and provides detailed analysis, comments, or input in areas of subject matter expertise.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is comprised of AMATS Policy Committee members (elected officials, the DOT&PF regional director, and Department of Environmental Conservation commissioner) and the DOT&PF Statewide Environmental Office, and provides guidance, advice, and decision-making throughout the Study at key decision points.

Public Involvement to Date

The Study Team has actively pursued feedback from the public and Study stakeholders leading up to the current Study phases. While larger public involvement activities such as open houses and public meetings coincided with key Study deliverables, the Study Team has strived to provide ongoing and continuous information sharing and communication efforts through electronic and print newsletters, small group meetings, website updates, and one-on-one meetings.

Phase 1: Study Initiation

The Seward-Glenn Connection PEL Study began in 2021. Initial communication management protocols and materials were developed to establish the Project's foundation. Outreach during Phase 1 focused on awareness building and Study history.

Phase 2: Problem Identification

Phase 2 activities centered on data collection and confirming the problem(s) to be solved. The Study Team worked with advisory committees, small groups, and the public to learn more about issues important to the community, to user groups, and the traveling public.

Phase 3: Purpose and Need

During Phase 3, the Project's Purpose and Need and Evaluation Criteria were drafted with public feedback collected at Listening Posts, small group meetings, and at a hybrid virtual and in-person public meeting. The public was encouraged to submit other ideas focused on the Project's purpose and need during a 30-day comment period.

Phase 4: Develop Range of Preliminary Alternatives

The Study entered Phase 4 during 2023. This phase of public involvement focused on continued stakeholder engagement to help guide development of preliminary alternatives, sharing and collecting feedback on preliminary alternatives, and sharing information on how public input had influenced development of preliminary alternatives. Preliminary alternative development was guided by a workshop and small group meetings, culminating in a public meeting on February 7, 2024, where the alternatives were shared. The Study Team further shared these alternatives during the 60-day public comment period via a variety of outreach methods, which included 11 Facebook posts, six e-Blasts, distribution of information flyers and more. The Study Team also attended and/or hosted 12 meetings with local stakeholders, eight AMATS committee meetings, three Study committee meetings, and five community council meetings. The public was encouraged to comment on the data collected and alternatives developed, as well as suggest their own changes and additional data collection recommendations.

Additional information related to public involvement during early phases of the Study's development can be found in Appendix A: Previous Outreach Activities 2021 – 2024; details regarding outreach activities, including public meeting comment response logs, may be found on the [Study Library](#) and the [Public Outreach](#) pages of the Study website.

Moving Forward: Public Involvement Goals and Objectives – Alternatives Refinement to Final PEL

As outlined in Section 4.1 of the [April 2022 Comms Plan](#), the Project’s communication objectives are to provide opportunities for stakeholders to be informed about and participate meaningfully in the Study’s development and to obtain approval from local planning authorities. The sections below outline the outreach steps, methods, tactics, and activities that will be used to encourage the public and Study stakeholders to contribute meaningfully to the Study’s final phases. The activities build upon each other to solicit public comments that will be incorporated into the draft and final PEL Study Report.

Phase 5: Alternatives Refinement – Outreach Methods and Activities (Spring 2024–Winter 24/25)

Public involvement and requests for comments become more focused as a study or project is developed. As alternatives are refined, requests for public comments become more concentrated on the data collected and how well an alternative meets screening criterion.

Now that the PEL Study’s purpose and need, screening criteria, and broad range of alternatives have been identified, the Study can move into the alternatives screening and refinement phase. The Study Team refined alternatives based on public feedback from Phase 4, developed traffic models and environmental analysis that compared benefits and challenges across the proposed alternatives, carefully reviewed key potential environmental effects, and made refinements based on results. This information is shared broadly and with the Study’s committees, key stakeholders, and community members to begin identifying potential mitigation measures¹² for the refined alternatives.

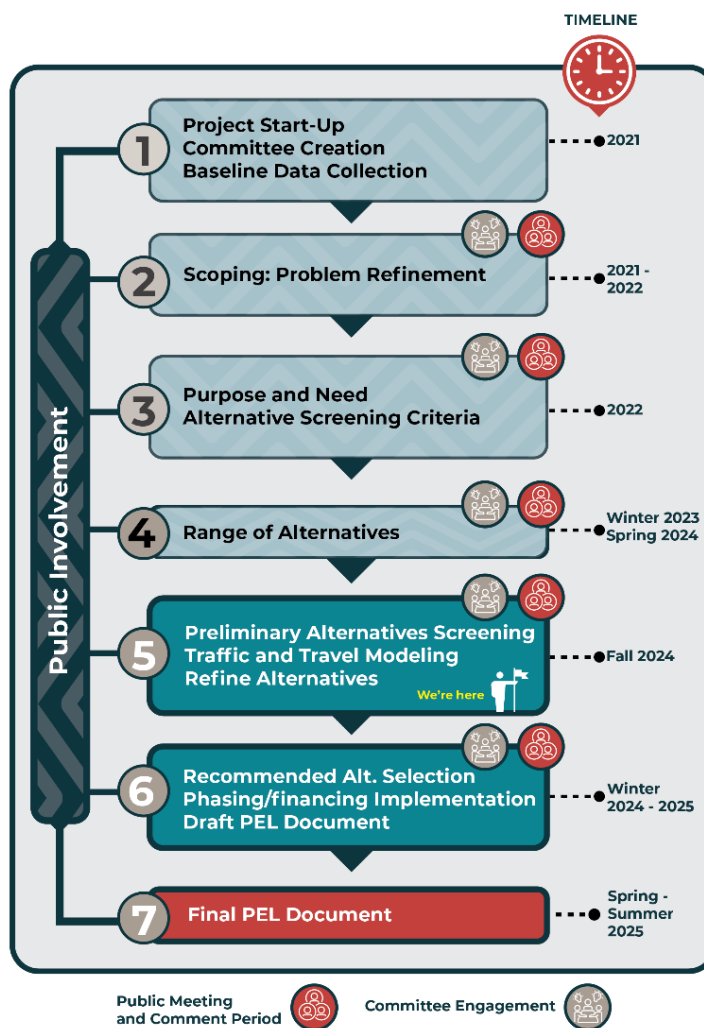


Figure 4 Alternatives Refinement Phase

¹² Mitigations are relevant and reasonable actions that avoid impacts to or protect, restore, or enhance the environment based on the understanding of a potential alternative’s environmental consequences.

The Alternatives Refinement culminated with a public open house and 80-day public comment period, including associated activities to share screening results and the refined alternatives, and seek additional public input on why—or why not—each alternative meets the Study’s purpose and need. The project team also solicits ideas for how DOT&PF can mitigate potential impacts¹³ from the refined alternatives.

What our stakeholders need from us

During Phase 5 stakeholders will benefit from ongoing communication about what the Study team is doing “behind the scenes” to further refine alternatives. As alternatives are refined based on stakeholder input and modeling data, the Study team will engage key stakeholder groups and committees in a series of meetings and workshops to discuss the pros and cons of recommended refinements to the alternatives. Leading up to the next public comment period and public open house, the Study Team will provide regular updates to the public and share what we heard during the Phase 4 public comment period as well as responses to comments from the Study’s subject matter experts.

An 80-day comment period and a public open house in December, 2025, shared how public comment on the draft alternatives and additional data collected is reflected in the refined alternatives.

What we need from our stakeholders

Similar to the request for public comments period during the preliminary alternatives development, the Study Team will seek substantive comments on the refined alternatives, not only asking what people like or do not like about an alternative, but also why they like or do not like something, as well as asking questions such as: Is there new information the Study Team didn’t consider, or new factors to be addressed? How would these impact the alternatives’ refinements? Are there fatal flaws that would prevent a refined alternative from moving forward?

How this input shapes the Study

Public comments during Phase 5: Alternatives Refinement will help DOT&PF identify a preferred alternative (or alternatives) to present in the Study’s next phase. Public comments will help identify benefits and impacts of each of the refined alternatives as well as which alternative best meets the Study’s purpose and need and balances environmental and other values.

Tools

The Study Team will reach out to the Study’s stakeholders during the alternatives refinement phase using the following tools¹⁴:

¹³ Impacts (or effects) can include environmental, visual, historic, economic, social, health or other effects resulting from an action.

¹⁴ See Appendix B: Outreach Strategies for detailed descriptions.

Audience	Tools	Purpose	Timeframe
Community Outreach	Community councils (Target: Fairview, Airport Heights, Government Hill, Airport Heights, Downtown and Rogers Park)	Provide updates on Study status and respond to community questions.	As needed according to project advancements
	Mailings and/or emails	Updates on Study status and encourage continued stakeholder engagement.	Ongoing
	Website updates	Regular updates on project status; announce public meetings and activities.	Ongoing
	Workshop	Share outcomes from stage 4 and get feedback on the project team's preliminary plan for incorporating public input into the next iteration of alternatives.	Fall 2024
	Public Open House	Share refinements to preliminary alternatives, cause and effect of different scenarios, share traffic modeling, and updates based on public comments. Request public comments on refined alternatives.	Fall/Winter 2024
	Meetings	Demonstrate feedback received and share approaches and refinements to address ideas and concerns.	Fall/Winter 2024
Committees	Small group presentations and/or one-on-one meetings	Provide updates on Study status and respond to stakeholder questions.	Ongoing/As needed
Businesses and community groups	Paid advertising	Sponsored ads in Anchorage Daily News to provide Study information and status updates.	Fall into Winter 2024

Audience	Tools	Purpose	Timeframe
Media	Paid advertising	Sponsored ads in Anchorage Daily News to provide Study information and status updates.	Fall 2024
	Social media	Targeted to users in the Study area, provide Study information relative to alternatives refinement.	Ongoing

Phase 6: Draft PEL Document Development & Preferred Alternative(s) – Outreach Methods and Activities (Winter 2024–Spring 2025)

Following public input on refined alternatives, the Study Team hopes to identify a recommended alternative (or alternatives) to be included in the draft PEL study. The recommended alternative(s) identifies (or helps prioritize) what DOT&PF proposes pursuing as it moves into a more detailed environmental review under NEPA.

During this phase, the Study Team will make additional refinements to the alternatives and prepare a draft PEL Study report which will include a summary of all public involvement activities to date, data collected, analysis results, and other information about the PEL process, as well as a detailed explanation on why the recommended alternative(s) best meets the Study’s goals.

Phase 6 will culminate with a public comment period, and public open house with associated activities to announce the recommended alternative, share the draft document, and seek additional public input on the Study’s conclusions. This will be an opportunity for to the public and agencies to provide substantive

comments on the overall Study and its development prior to the final PEL document and subsequent design project or projects' NEPA review, which will include additional opportunities for public engagement.

What our stakeholders need from us

During Phase 6, stakeholders want regular updates on the document's development, which may include updates on key data used in alternative evaluation or other data-driven deliberations. Stakeholders need to know what information the Study Team is using to make its final recommendations as well as the trade-offs of each alternative in relation to the Study's purpose and need.

What we need from our stakeholders

The Study Team needs stakeholders to review the draft document and provide comments on any errors or omissions relative to the alternatives refinement and evaluation. Specifically, are there detailed reasons why the preferred alternative(s) should not move forward for further environmental review?

How this input shapes the Study

Stakeholder input at this stage identifies incremental adjustments and clarifications on the recommended alternative(s) and PEL study report prior to the final document's development, approval, and subsequent environmental review.

Tools

The Study Team will reach out to the Study's stakeholders during the Draft PEL Development phase using the following tools:

Audience	Tools	Purpose	Timeframe
Community Outreach	Community councils (Target: Fairview, Airport Heights, Government Hill, Airport Heights, Downtown and Rogers Park)	Provide updates on Study status and respond to community questions.	As needed according to project advancements

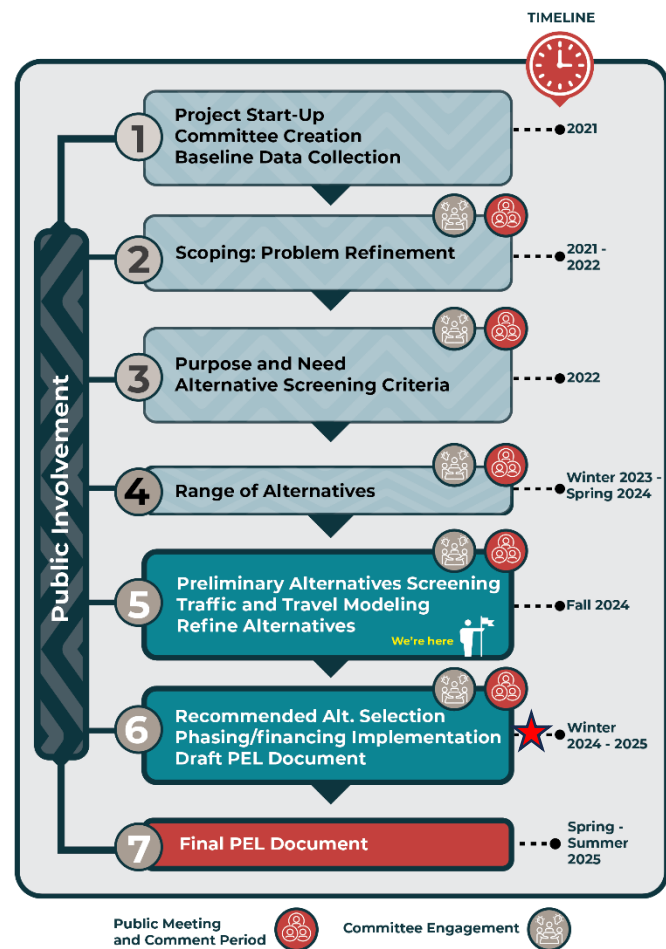


Figure 5 Preferred Alternatives Phase

Audience	Tools	Purpose	Timeframe
	Mailings and/or emails	Provide updates on Study status and upcoming comment opportunities.	Quarterly or as needed according to project advancements or promote meetings
	Website updates	Regular updates on project status; announce public meetings and activities.	Ongoing
	Public Open House	Share preferred alternatives and screening results, request public comments.	Spring 2025
Committees	Small group meetings	Review document, get detailed input, request feedback and recommendations for balancing public comments that create conflicts.	Winter 2024/2025
Businesses and community groups	Small group presentations	Provide updates on Study status and respond to stakeholder questions. As appropriate, review document, get detailed input, request feedback and recommendations for balancing public comments that create conflicts.	Ongoing
Media	Paid advertising	Sponsored ads in Anchorage Daily News to provide Study information and status updates.	Spring 2025
	Social media	Targeted to users in the Study area, provide Study information relative to alternatives refinement.	Ongoing

Phase 7: Final PEL Document – Outreach Methods and Activities (Spring 2025)

Using information provided by stakeholders on the Draft PEL document, the Study Team will update information into a Final PEL document, which will provide a summary of the planning process and recommendations and become the launching point for NEPA analysis.

The Final PEL document includes details on the Study’s background, purpose and need, methodology, agency and public coordination efforts, alternatives considered, planning assumptions, environmental impacts, and issues to be addressed as the project moves forward into NEPA review.

What our stakeholders need from us

The publication of the Final PEL document concludes the PEL study process, but it is not the end of the project. Our stakeholders need to know how to access the final document and how it fits into future environmental review processes, and both DOT&PF’s and AMATS’s plans moving forward.

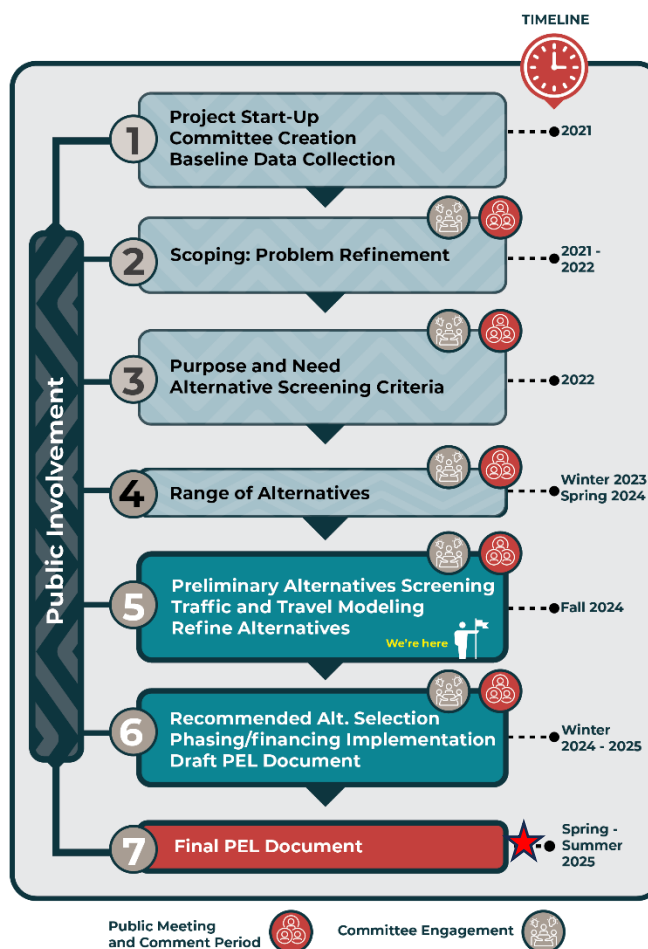


Figure 6 Final PEL Document Phase

What we need from our stakeholders

Public involvement efforts supporting the Final PEL release will focus on information and awareness building. Communications will include information on where to access the Final document and its recommendations.

Tools

Audience	Tools	Purpose	Timeframe
Community Outreach	Community council (CC) and other listservs	Inform stakeholders of the availability of the final PEL document and share next steps in the NEPA process	One meeting for each CC within the project area aligned with raising awareness about the final PEL.
	Emails	Inform stakeholders of the availability of the final PEL document and share next steps in the NEPA process	Twice to raise awareness about delivery of final PEL

Audience	Tools	Purpose	Timeframe
	Website updates	Post Final documents and other updated materials; provide information on where to find hard copy versions of the Final PEL document; provide information on next steps and schedule.	Ongoing
	Hard copy materials	Hard copies of the document will be made available at rec centers and public libraries.	Spring 2025
Media	Paid media	Advertisement announcing final PEL and availability of documents.	Spring 2025
	Social media	Targeted to users in the Study area, provide Study information relative to alternatives refinement.	Scheduled to raise awareness about delivery of final PEL

Comment Coordination

Comments received on the Study will be collected, saved to the Study files, and collated in a summarized narrative format. Comments will be inserted verbatim into a tracking spreadsheet, which will include a combination of direct and summarized responses¹⁵. All comments received will be included in the final PEL document, along with responses to comments considered substantive under NEPA.

Public Involvement Summary Reports

Summary reports will be developed following each public meeting and will be included as an appendix to the Final PEL Study Report.¹⁶

Evaluation

Evaluation is critical to ensure that public participation goals are met. Throughout the process, the Study Team will track participation efforts and results both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Comments: The Study Team will assess the level and quality and participation through the quantity and variety of outreach efforts and the volume of comments and feedback, while at the same time evaluating the input. For example, if the Study Team is primarily receiving comments saying “I like/dislike this alternative,” the Team may explore ways to encourage the public to make more effective remarks.

¹⁵ See [April 2022 Communication Plan](#), 6.0 Comment Management.

¹⁶ See [April 2022 Communication Plan](#), 6.4 Communication/Public Involvement Summary Reports.

Demographics Data Gathering: Meeting sign in sheets, comments forms (electronic and hardcopy), and listening posts will request (but not require) the following data: name, address, community council, ethnicity, age, and gender.

This will allow the Study Team to compare the data with general area demographics to identify who among project-area residents may be under-represented in participation. This may help us refine outreach efforts.

Chronology: A detailed reporting of public communication and participation activities will be kept. The report will chronicle outreach efforts and track meetings, identify team members who were involved, and demonstrate the consistency of the public involvement program.

Monitor the Media: The team may monitor news articles, letters to the editor, and other published sources to stay abreast of public perception of the Study, concerns, and issues. News articles may be copied to the Study files and distributed to team members. Portable document format (.pdf) files of published articles may be posted on the website.

Future updates and guidance

This Communication Plan may be amended or updated throughout the final phases of the Study. A Public Involvement Summary, which includes this guide, may serve to inform future public involvement efforts during the NEPA Phase.

Appendix A: Early Outreach Activities 2021–early 2024

Study Initiation

The current Seward Glenn Connection PEL Study began in 2021 with meetings between DOT&PF and the Agencies and Tribes, Technical Advisory, Community Advisory, and Executive/AMATS Committees. These meetings provided members with information about the Study’s background and the discussions helped to shape the Seward to Glenn Connection Project’s purpose and need statement. The Study Team engaged small groups throughout the coming months, leading up to a virtual public meeting in January 2022¹⁷ to introduce the Study to the public and learn about the area’s transportation challenges from those most directly impacted. The Study Team received more than 400 comments and 1,862 views on the online Open House.

Purpose and Need Development

The Purpose and Need Statement explains why the Study is needed and key challenges to be addressed. Working with the Study’s committees, DOT&PF and the Study Team developed a draft purpose and need statement that was shared at a public meeting in May 2022¹⁸ and at information kiosks located at key locations within the project area.

The [May 25, 2022, virtual public](#) meeting focused on the Draft Purpose and Need Statement as well as draft alternative selection criteria. Input from the public helped strengthen the multimodal nature of the Study and the contributions the Study can make to community cohesion, neighborhood connections, and livability. A revised purpose and need statement was developed in January 2023 based on public comments heard at Public Meeting #2. Public input also shaped the alternative selection criteria, with commenters suggesting more emphasis on neighborhood connections and cohesion, as well as multimodal transportation.

Alternative Development

The goal of the alternatives development phase of the Study was to ensure a reasonable range of alternatives are identified; screen alternatives for fatal flaws; and to identify workable solutions to any identified challenges.

An Alternatives Workshop in February 2023¹⁹ at the Fairview Rec Center provided interactive and independent opportunities to learn about the Study’s status and provide input on preliminary design ideas based on the Purpose and Need Statement.

The Study Team also participated in and/or hosted walking tours, small group meetings, and a fourth public meeting in February 2024,²⁰ (with a 60-day comment period) to seek input for refining and screening the seven preliminary alternatives.

Meeting notes, previous online open houses, comment responses, and other materials related to public involvement can be found in the [Study library](#) and [Public Outreach](#) at www.sewardglennconnection.com.

¹⁷ See the [January 2022 Comment Summary Report](#).

¹⁸ See the [May 2022 Comment Summary Report](#).

¹⁹ See the [February 2023 Comment Summary Report](#).

²⁰ The comment summary report for February 2024 is under review and will be published to the Project Library.

Appendix B – Our Stakeholders

The following table includes a list of individuals, businesses, organizations, and others that may have a vested interest in the Study and its outcomes. The list is not intended to be comprehensive but highlights key engagements the Study will target going forward.

General Public	Non-Profit Organizations, Churches
Project-area residents and property owners	All churches within the project-area
Area businesses and business owners	Anchorage Senior Activity Center
Regional traveling public (people traveling through the project area)	Anchorage Museum
Community Councils/Community Groups	Bike Anchorage
Airport Heights Community Council	Enlaces Alaska
Fairview Community Council	Polynesian Association of Alaska
Downtown Community Council	Municipality of Anchorage (MOA)
Government Hill Community Council	Merrill Field
Mountain View Community Council	People Mover/MOA Transportation Dept.
Rogers Park Community Council	Anchorage School District
Federation of Community Councils	MOA Parks and Recreation Department
Third Avenue Radicals	MOA Planning Department
Fairview Business Association	MOA Watershed Management
Fairness For Fairview	MOA Historic Preservation
NeighborWorks Alaska	MOA Traffic Department
Pacific Community of Alaska	MOA Housing and Homelessness Committee
Hmoob Cultural Center	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Elected Officials	Mat-Su Valley Planning Department
District 17, 18, & 19 House of Representatives	Fairview Recreation Center
Districts I and J Alaska Senate	Business Community
Anchorage Mayor	Alaska Regional Hospital
Assembly Members	Anchorage Economic Development Corporation
Emergency Responders	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
Anchorage Police Department	Alaska Trucking Association
Anchorage Fire Department	Alaska Railroad Corporation
MOA Office of Emergency Management	First National Bank Alaska
Agencies	Carrs/Safeway
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	Weaver Brothers
DOT&PF Bridge Group	United Freight and Transport Inc.
DOT&PF Traffic	Tribal Entities
DOT&PF Cultural Resources	Tribal Entities
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory	Cook Inlet Region, Inc.
DOT&PF Environmental Office	Native Village of Eklutna

DOT Civil Rights	Eklutna, Inc.
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson	Knik Tribal Council
Port of Alaska	Knikatu, Inc.
Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Alaska State Historic Preservation Office	
AMATS	
DOT&PF Statewide Environmental office	

Appendix C: Outreach Strategy Terms and Descriptions

The following descriptions explain the tools and strategies the Glenn to Seward Connection PEL team will use to reach a wide audience of affected stakeholders and interested parties.

Meetings and Events

Listening Posts/Traveling Open House

Tables or booths at strategic public locations to meet stakeholders where they are to spread Study awareness and increase Study update understanding.

Online Open Houses

A virtual, self-paced option featuring all materials and documents presented at the in-person public meeting in a Section 508 compliant format that is open for two weeks from the onset of each public meeting.

Open Houses

An informal event open to the public to view Study materials.

Public Meetings

A forum open to the community and public that is structured and formal in nature. The purpose of the meeting is to present information to the public and receive feedback. Held at key phases of Study development in locations convenient to the Study area that are compliant with ADA requirements. Meetings will be coordinated in a manner consistent with U.S. Department of Transportation guidance.²¹

Small Group Meetings

Trade organization meetings, community council presentations, presentations to NGOs, churches, and civic groups designed to share information, respond to questions, and encourage public comment.

Stakeholder Committee Meetings

Key stakeholders identified as significantly impacted members within the Study area that meet frequently through each stage of the Study.

Workshops

Half-day workshops of approximately 15-50 participants are designed to address Study issues, allow participants to understand conditions and decision-making criteria, get detailed project updates, and provide early input on project team advances.

Existing Mechanisms

Community Calendars

Where deemed necessary, community calendars such as chambers of commerce, churches, schools, community councils, and State of Alaska public involvement calendars will be utilized to promote Study activities and events.

²¹See Appendix C: [PROMISING PRACTICES FOR MEANINGFUL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN TRANSPORTATION DECISION-MAKING Updated November 2023](#)

ListServes

Information on public meetings and other events is shared to community organizations and others to post on their Listservs (e.g., Federation of Community Councils, What's Up).

Informational Materials

Fact Sheet

A document outlining high-level Study information including project contacts information and other sources for additional information.

FAQs

FAQs will be updated periodically, typically as responses to inquiries are communicated. Answers are addressed in a thoughtful and concise matter.

Translated Materials

Translate documents (e.g., public meeting notices, Study fact sheets, and comment sheets) into languages that represent 5 percent or more of the general population likely to be affected or encountered. Within the Study area, the following languages have been identified for focus:

1. Spanish
2. Samoan
3. Hmong

Media (Earned) and Advertising

Print Advertising

Paid advertisements in circulated publications, including online, print, and legal.

Social Media

Social platform in which Study information is shared: Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, Threads, etc. May include an advertising component, with targeted and boosted posts.

Online Information

Story Maps

GIS-based multi-media presentations on the overall or specific features of the Project, often used to support virtual public meetings.

Website

A dedicated online site hosted on the DOT&PF Study website that shares Study updates, Study contact information, and past meeting records.